(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) There is no reliable data to support the existence of UFO.

Projects running behind schedule

748. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Government projects are running behind schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether due to untimely completion of such projects, there is cost escalation of such projects;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) the reasons for such projects that could not be completed in time and the effective steps taken to complete such projects at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI G. K. VASAN): (a) and (b) As on March 2008, out of 909 projects costing Rs.20 crores and above on the monitor of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 346 projects are running behind schedule with respect to the latest approved schedule.

(c) and (d) Delays in the implementation of projects is one of the reasons for cost escalation. Cost overrun in 346 delayed projects is Rs.24,689 crores which is 13.33 per cent of the latest approved cost of Rs.1,85,089 crore. Besides delay in projects, cost escalation is also due to changes in scope, under estimation of original costs, change in foreign exchange rates, high cost of environmental safeguards, high cost of land acquisition & rehabilitation, general price rise etc.

(e) The reasons for the projects running behind schedule include: funds constraints, delay in land acquisition, delay in supply of equipment, law and order problems, and geographical surprises during implementation.

The effective steps taken by the Government to complete such projects at the earliest *inter-alia* include:

(i) adoption of two-stage clearance system and stricter appraisal of projects before investment approval;

(ii) taking up of projects for implementation only after funds have been fully tied up;

(iii) in-depth review of projects on monthly and quarterly basis by the Government;

(iv) follow up with the State Governments in respect of problems relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation related issues, forest clearances, infrastructure facilities, ensuring law and order at project sites, etc.

(v) setting up of an Empowered Committee in the administrative Ministries for review of departmentally executed projects;

(vi) inter-ministerial coordination for resolving unresolved problems;

(vii) setting up of Standing Committees in the Ministries/Departments to fix responsibility for time and cost overruns;

(viii) appointment of nodal officers for each project with continuity of tenure; and

(ix) issue of guidelines on standard bidding documents for adoption.

Cost of escalation of various schemes

749. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether improper implementation of various schemes and programmes has led to both cost escalation and locking of several crores of rupees during the last five years;

(b) if so, the details of the total cost escalation of Central sector projects due to delays in implementation of projects during the last five years and the total amount locked due to non implementation of several schemes/programmes; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) and (b) The cost escalation in projects is due to various reasons such as lack of infrastructure facilities, change in scope during implementation, faulty design, high cost of environmental safeguards, high cost of land and rehabilitation, under estimation, exchange rate variation, fund constraints, general price rise, delays in implementation due to inadequate planning, etc. During the last five years *i.e.* April 2003 - March 2008, 471 projects with anticipated completion cost of Rs. 181620 crore were completed. As on March 2008, out of 909 projects costing Rs.20 crores and above on the monitor of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 346 projects are running behind schedule with respect to the latest approved schedule. The Cost escalation in 346 delayed projects is Rs.24,689 crores which is 13.33 per cent of the latest approved cost of Rs.1,85,089 crore.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to complete such projects at the earliest *inter-alia* include:

(i) adoption of two-stage clearance system and stricter appraisal of projects before investment approval;

(ii) taking up of projects for implementation only after funds have been fully tied up;

(iii) in-depth review of projects on monthly and quarterly basis by the Government;

(iv) follow up with the State Governments in respect of problems relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation related issues, forest clearances, infrastructure facilities, ensuring law and order at project sites, etc.;

(v) setting up of an Empowered Committee in the administrative Ministries for review of departmentally executed projects;